REPORT RESUMES

ED 016 757 UD 005 518

A READING PROGRAM FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN. REVISION 1.
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YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES FOUNDATION, LOS ANGELES, CALIF
PUB DATE 16 APR 65
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.50 HC-$2.84 69P.

DESCRIPTORS- *MEXICAN AMERICANS, *READING PROGRAMS, *PRESCHOOL CHILDREN, *PRIMARY GRADES, *LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, ORAL COMMUNICATION, VERBAL LEARNING, PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS, NEGRO STUDENTS, CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED, CHILD DEVELOPMENT, BILINGUALISM, READING ABILITY, READING PROCESSES, CULTURE CONFLICT, PROGRAM BUDGETING, PROGRAM PROPOSALS, NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS, EAST LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, MALABAR STREET SCHOOL

THIS PROPOSAL OUTLINES PLANS FOR A PROGRAM FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL THROUGH THIRD GRADE AT THE MALABAR STREET SCHOOL IN EAST LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. IN CONTRAST TO THE TRADITIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM, THE PROGRAM WILL EMPHASIZE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY VERBAL MEDIATION SKILLS. READING INSTRUCTION WILL BE BASED ON WORD CONFIGURATION, PHONETIC, KINESTHETIC, AND LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE METHODS, AND OTHER SUBJECTS WILL BE TAUGHT AS A MEANS OF FURTHERING READING INSTRUCTION. EACH CHILD WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A LARGE AMOUNT OF SELF-INSTRUCTION. THE PROGRAM RECOGNIZES THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD AND THEIR FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP TO READING DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES. TO INVOLVE THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY, THE PROJECT WILL ESTABLISH MULTIPLE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS, EACH STAFFED BY TWO MEXICAN-AMERICAN MOTHERS WORKING WITH TEN CHILDREN. THE REPORT DESCRIBES THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN PROBLEM IN CALIFORNIA AND GIVES SOME DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM BUDGET, WHICH IS ESTIMATED AT $294,461 FOR A 2-YEAR PERIOD. IT ALSO CONTAINS RESOURCE INFORMATION ON CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEGRO AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILD'S READING ABILITY, A TIME SCHEDULE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING, AND A DISCUSSION OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MAJOR CURRICULUM AREAS TO READING. (LB)

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original, original proposal which did not get sent to washington for funding but includes the basic ideas considered extreme at the time.

ED016757

A READING PROGRAM
FOR
MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN

Youth Opportunities Foundation

AD005578

March 15, 1965

Los Angeles, California

Revision 1
April 16, 1965

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PROLOGUE

The program presented in this proposal reflects the thinking and has the enthusiastic support of many Mexican-American educators and other professionals in California. It addresses itself to the single most important educational problem facing the Mexican community in the Southwest --- difficulties encountered by their children in learning to read.

The Youth Opportunities Foundation has taken the lead in attacking this problem. The dedicated support and cooperation of representatives of the Los Angeles City Schools and the School of Education, California State College at Los Angeles, are very much appreciated.

Felix Castro

Felix Castro
Executive Vice President
Youth Opportunities Foundation
April 16, 1965

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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ABSTRACT

It is estimated that nearly one-half of all Mexican-American children in the elementary schools of California may be reading markedly below grade level. Alarming numbers of unemployed, out-of-school, functionally illiterate Mexican-American youth are the focal point of community and governmental concern.

A program is presented which is designed to bring the reading ability of Mexican-American children up to or beyond grade level by the end of the third grade year, at which time future school achievement is largely determined by past performance. It is an extension of an existing, highly succesful pre-school program which has been in operation at the Malabar Street Elementary School in East Los Angeles during the 1964-1965 school year. It involves: (1) a program in language development which includes the community, as well as the school, and which emphasizes verbal mediation skills rather than language pattern repetition exercises and (2) an holistic approach to reading instruction in the primary grades. The Mexican-American child's personal qualities of individualism and independence and his cultural background will be utilized as he learns in a supportive environment. He will, therefore, be eager to participate in the listening, speaking, reading and writing syndrome wherein his self-discriminated knowledge will become integrated into his functioning self.

This two-year program will involve 400 children. It will be undertaken in September, 1965, at the Malabar School in East Los Angeles under the auspices of the Los Angeles City Schools, the California State College at Los Angeles and the Youth Opportunities Foundation.

Total cost of the two-year program will be $294,461.

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Americans of Mexican descent comprise approximately 10 per cent of the total population of California. Nearly one-half of these people have failed to go beyond the eighth grade.

One of the heaviest concentrations of people of Mexican descent in the entire world lies in the Boyle Heights section of East Los Angeles. Over one-half of them live at the deprivation level. For over fifty years, these people have labored at the lowest end of the socio-economic scale. Now, however, automation is fast eliminating many of the jobs they have hitherto relied on for employment.

The Problem

The Mexican-Americans are consequently turning to the schools for help in preparing their children for more highly skilled employment. However, it would seem that reconsideration of the present curriculum will be required if the schools are to succeed at this task. At the Malabar School, for example, where the student body is 90 per cent Mexican-American, nearly one-half of the children read markedly below grade level. This in spite of the fact that the Malabar School is one of the outstanding training schools for the Los Angeles City School system. Bilingualism is thought to be one of the primary causative factors of this poor in-school achievement. The deviation of these children's oral language from that of the text books from which they learn is often so great that the children find it difficult to relate the one to the other. They often find it equally difficult to relate their own oral language to that of their teachers'.

The Reading Process and The Mexican-American Child

The life experiences of poverty and of his Mexican/Hispanic culture do not prepare the Mexican-American child well for the inappropriate instruction he currently receives in our Anglo, middle-class oriented schools. His bilingualism adds to his educational confusions, particularly as he tries to learn to read. The Mexican-American child learns new written vocabulary slowly because too often he must learn of the existence of the English word at the same time that he learns its written configuration.

Phonics fails to provide the usual help in word analysis because of the conflicting Spanish-English aural patterns. Syntactical clues to parts of speech and/or sentence meaning are often similarly unreliable. The Mexican-American child is often confined to concrete, non-verbal clues to communication for an unduly long period. He is thus apt to be resistant to the usual language progression into the past and future tenses. Consequently, his free use and understanding of symbolic language is delayed and sometimes thwarted. Unresolved cultural ambivalences between the demands of the Anglo school and his Mexican-American home drain his energy for learning. His self-concept, excellent as he enters school, is often undermined by value conflict and educational failure, resulting in loss of hope as he progresses through our elementary schools. The inability of these children to learn under existing educational procedures leads to low teacher morale and frustration, thus compounding the problem.

Description of the Program

A program is proposed which acknowledges the true dimensions of the Mexican-American child's problems in reading. This program will (1) strengthen the Spanish-English speaking child's oral language, (2) instruct him in a manner suited to his language development, temperament and cultural background, (3) conduct research on his language development and methods of instructing him, and (4) provide teachers with materials and curriculum that will enable them to experience success in teaching Mexican-American children.

The program is planned for four hundred Mexican-American children 3-9 years old, for two years, at which time an extension of two more years may be requested. Starting with the preschool demonstration center at the Malabar School, the language development program for Mexican-American children 3-6 years old is designed to spread rapidly into the community by means of multiple neighborhood centers so that the total community will be involved in helping their children's language development. Two Mexican-American mothers will work with ten children at each neighborhood center. With the help of teachers, administrators and researchers from the public schools and the college, these parents will strengthen the children's Spanish and English oral language. By working with the children at an age when language develops most rapidly, an optimum degree of success may be anticipated. The neighborhood centers will thus provide for the language development of the preschool children at a nominal cost to the schools without subjecting the children to the unsuitably large groups they would have to join if the project were to be carried on in the traditional school setting. These centers may also demonstrate the ability and determination of Mexican-Americans to help themselves, and may point the way toward a new dimension in public funding.

During the children's primary school years (ages 6-9), almost all of the child's in-school learning day will be spent learning to read. Because of the individualistic temperament of Mexican-American children, particularly Mexican-American boys, as well as the personal quality of their language, all phases of reading instruction will be taught individually. In addition, large amounts of self-instruction in reading will be required of each child, since independence is one of the most valuable personal qualities these children possess. Because of the complexity of the reading process itself, and because of the diversity of personalities found among this group of learners, an holistic reading program will be used. Therefore, reading instruction for all of the project children will be based simultaneously on four interrelated but distinct methods: (1) word configuration, (2) phonetic, (3) kinesthetic, (4) language experience. These will all be tailored to the special needs of the Mexican-American child. The disciplines of History, Science, Music, etc., will be taught primarily as a means of furthering instruction in reading-- thus providing added practice in reading for all children and added incentive to read for those children who particularly like one or more of these disciplines. The content of all these disciplines will be closely related to the Mexican-American child's cultural heritage. Where necessary, new materials for the children's use will be written for this phase of the project. Confidence in this program is derived from previous success with a limited number of pupils in high socio-economic areas and from recent action research at the Malabar School. This approach would appear to be extremely effective for any school system which regards individualism and reading as the key to academic success.

Evaluation - Dissemination

There are as yet no reliable tests of the language development of the Spanish-English speaking child. However, the children's language development will be constantly evaluated throughout the entire project by observation, as well as by such testing instruments as are now available. The children's progress in learning to read will be tested at six-month intervals by the reading achievement test currently in use by the Los Angeles City Schools at the time of testing. Final determination of the effectiveness of the project can be made only at the end of the children's second grade year, however, since reading instruction for these children must necessarily be spread over that many years, at least. The reading performance of the project children will be compared to control groups within the school, to the progress made by children at the school in the past years, and to the progress of all the children in the Los Angeles City School system at the time of testing. The subjective evaluation of the project by the administrative personnel, teaching staff, parents and children, as well as reports on the research and statistical evidence of the children's reading ability, will be made available in mimeograph form at six-month intervals throughout the project. Content of instruction, methodology and materials used will be explained in detail, for use by teachers and administrators working with Mexican-American children. These will be issued in mimeographed form at six-month intervals.

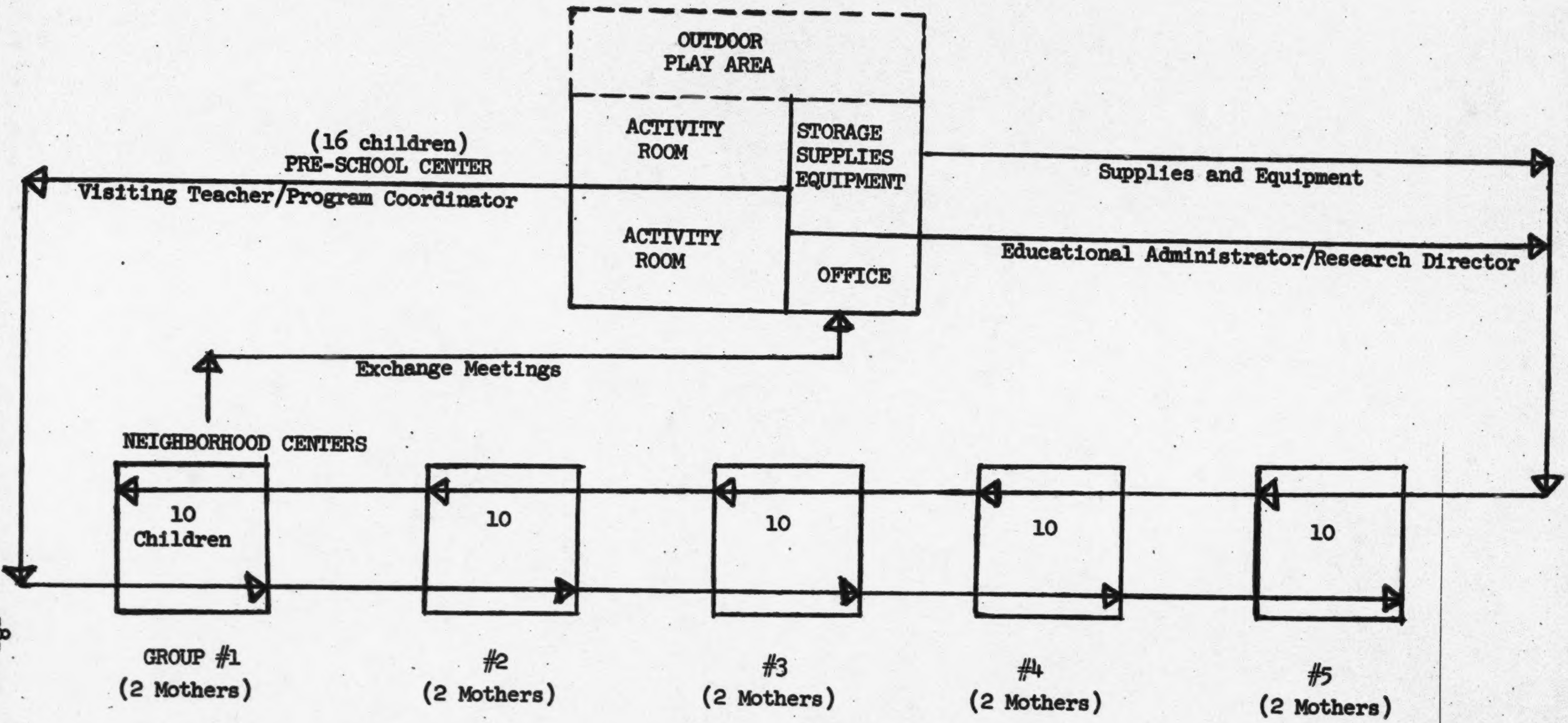
Program Participants

This project will be carried out by the Los Angeles City Schools, the School of Education of California State College at Los Angeles, and the Youth Opportunities Foundation. The Los Angeles City Schools will be in charge of the project administration, including supervision of instruction and personnel, as well as distribution of supplies. California State College at Los Angeles will be represented by the Research Director, whose responsibilities will be direction and evaluation of research, as well as preparation of all research reports. The Youth Opportunities Foundation will be responsible for financial management, progress monitoring and liaison between the Mexican-American community and the Project.

TIME SCHEDULE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF READING

	Fall '65	Spring '66	Fall '66	Spring '67	Fall '67
	(PHASE ONE)				
PRESCHOOL YEARS					
Age 3 (Preschool)	8_1	8_1 25_1	25_1 28_1	28_1 54_1	54_1 54_2
4	8_2	8_2 25_2	8_1 25_2 28_2	8_1 25_1 28_2 21	25_1 28_1 21 34
5 (Kindergarten)	8_3 22	8_3 22	8_2 22	8_2 25_2 22	8_1 25_2 28_2
PRIMARY YEARS					
Age 6 (1st Grade)		30_1	8_3 30_1 22	8_3 22	8_2 22
7 (2nd Grade)			30_2	30_1 30_2	8_3 30_1 22
8 (3rd Grade)					30_2
Total Children with Project from Preschool Years	24	74	130	205	293
Total Children Added to Project	22	52	104	104	104
GRAND TOTAL	46	126	234	309	397

Subscript 1 = First group of 8 children, of 25 children, of 28 children, of 30 children, etc.
Subscript 2 = Second group of 8 children, of 25 children, of 28 children, of 30 children, etc.
Subscript 3 = Third group of 8 children.


OUTDOOR PLAY AREA
ACTIVITY ROOM
STORAGE SUPPLIES EQUIPMENT
(16 children)
PRE-SCHOOL CENTER
Visiting Teacher/Program Coordinator
ACTIVITY ROOM
OFFICE
Supplies and Equipment
Educational Administrator/Research Director
Exchange Meetings
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS
10 Children
10
10
10
10
GROUP #1
(2 Mothers)
#2
(2 Mothers)
#3
(2 Mothers)
#4
(2 Mothers)
#5
(2 Mothers)

RELATIONSHIP OF PRE-SCHOOL CENTER TO NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

Five Neighborhood Centers shown will be established in Fall, 1965; five more will be established in Spring, 1966; five more in Fall, 1966; and five more in Spring, 1967.

BUDGET SUMMARY 1965-67

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION		$219,142
Program Coordinator	$ 15,000	
Educational Administrator	15,000	
Research Director	30,000	
Secretary	10,800	
Teachers	108,000	
Preschool Mothers	13,500	
Bilingual Psychologist	3,000	
Nurse	1,340	
Research Transcribers	1,080	
Custodian	1,500	
Employee Benefits 10%	19,922	
EQUIPMENT		$ 48,550
Preschool	$ 28,600	
Audio Visual Unit	5,000	
Recording Units	2,700	
Non-Consumables	6,050	
Supplies	2,200	
Operation and Maintenance	4,000	
OVERHEAD		$ 26,769
TOTAL BUDGET 1965-67		$294,461

THE PROBLEM

THE PROBLEM

Americans of Mexican descent comprise approximately 10 per cent of the total population of California. Eighty per cent of these people are native born. The number of Californians with Spanish surnames increased 88.1 per cent from 1950 to 1960 in contrast with the total California population increase of 48.5 per cent. It may confidently be assumed, therefore, that the increase of Californians with Spanish surnames will continue at a rapid rate, since 70.4 per cent of them were under 35 years of age in 1960, the year of the last census, and since the immigration from Cuba, Mexico and other Latin American countries may be expected to continue.

Approximately one million people with Spanish surnames live in the eight counties of Southern California; over one-half million of these people live in the metropolitan Los Angeles area alone. In the Boyle Heights section of East Los Angeles, where the Malabar School is located, about three-fourths of the total population is composed of people with Spanish surnames. This is one of the heaviest concentrations of people of Mexican descent in the nation or, in fact, in the entire world. Only Mexico City and Guadalajara have equal or greater population concentrations.

Yet, despite their large numbers and despite the fact that Spanish and Mexican people pioneered in early California and made important contributions to its history, hundreds of thousands of Mexican-Americans are relegated, like non-whites, to inferior jobs and poverty-stricken neighborhoods.

Although, for example, men with Spanish surnames represent only 8.7 per cent of all employed men in the State of California, they comprise 41.9 per cent of all men employed as farm laborers and foremen. In addition, unemployment rates in 1960 were higher for both men and women with Spanish surnames (7.7 and 11.2 per cent, respectively) than for total white men and women (5.5 and 6.3 per cent, respectively).

In Boyle Heights, itself, 35.7 per cent of the family income is less than $4,000 as compared to that of Los Angeles County, where only 19.1 per cent is less than $4,000. In a scale of socio-economic rank from 3 (highest) to 18 (lowest), Boyle Heights ranks 17. Over half the families are at the deprivation level by Census Bureau standards. The educational attainment of the community is low, even though the median age for the population is low, a fact which generally predicts high median educational attainment.*

Alleviation of this problem is long overdue. For at least sixty years, Americans of Mexican descent have been faced with continuing economic underaccomplishment. For over sixty years, they have had to perform unskilled labor. Now, however, with automation rapidly replacing the unskilled laborer, Mexican-Americans can no longer plan on such laboring jobs for themselves or their children. Many of these jobs may disappear entirely in the very near future. Thus, the upgrading of their economic status is no longer a question of preference, but becomes a question of sheer survival itself.

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* Research Department Welfare Planning Council, L.A. Region, March, 1964

Mexican-American parents are turning to the schools for help in breaking the bonds of poverty and despair that is the current fate in store for their children. They recognize the fact that the relationship between economic well-being and education is very close. Sexton, in her book, "Education and Income" (1961), notes that:

> In the National Merit Scholarship Program, no awards were given to students in the lower income half during one recent semester.
>
> No "lower class" children received American Legion awards for outstanding citizenship.
>
> Enrollments in academic subjects were predominantly made up of children in the upper income half.
>
> In all grades, composite scores on achievement and I.Q. tests rise with family income levels.

These statistics were taken from a heterogeneous population. However, when one examines the educational achievement of the Mexican-Americans, the relationship between education and economic achievement is all the more striking. Whereas 21 per cent of the total population have completed one or more years of college, only about 7 per cent of the Mexican-Americans have done so. Approximately 50 per cent of all Mexican-Americans in California have only an eighth grade education, in contrast to 26 per cent of the total population. The gravity of the education situation for the Mexican-American is further highlighted by the fact that 7 per cent have received no schooling whatsoever, in contrast to 1 per cent of the Anglo population in Los Angeles County. Not only is the school drop-out rate higher among Mexican-Americans, but their in-school academic achievement is lower than that of the total school population, particularly in the field of reading.

Thus, it would appear that instruction in reading which is successful with the vast majority of California's children is singularly unsuccessful where American children of Mexican descent are concerned. While it is recognized that the social and emotional factors of poverty and bi-culturalism play a prominent part in the difficulties that Mexican-American children have in relating to school instruction in reading, bi-lingualism is thought to be the principal factor. Although the schools have tried to eliminate the use of Spanish in school by Mexican-American children, all of the Mexican-American children attending the Malabar School speak both Spanish and English in varying degrees. Some of the children are completely bi-lingual, functioning equally well in both languages, while others speak one language, either English or Spanish, almost exclusively, understanding only a word or two of the alternate language. The vast majority, however, fall along a continuum between these two extremes. This presents the school with a problem of some magnitude, for there is a critical relationship between oral language and reading. The fact that the oral language pattern growth of the Spanish-English speaking and hearing child may be deviant must be faced immediately, if reading instruction is to prove beneficial to these children.

Reading and writing, the secondary forms of language, are based on the primary forms of language, speaking and listening. Although the primary forms of language probably preceded the secondary forms in temporal development, there is, of course, no actual proof that they did. In any case, as far as the child who is learning to read is concerned, the four forms of language are inter-related, as well as inter-dependent. Each is needed by the three others for optimum reading development.

According to Webster, language is:

> "The body of words and methods of combining words used and understood by a considerable community"

By this definition, there are at least two separate areas which must be considered when we plan early reading experiences for beginning readers. Of the first, the body of words, a good deal is known. Countless studies of Anglo-American children's vocabulary have been made since the turn of the century which have shown impressive statistical evidence of the growth in vocabulary that occurs from childhood to adult life. The basic reading texts have been responsive to the young child's growing needs for a "controlled" vocabulary, and teachers are alert to the need for instruction in vocabulary development.

Very little, however, is actually known about the body of words that constitute the functioning vocabulary of Mexican-American children who are starting to learn to read. In addition, it is assumed by their Anglo teachers that the Mexican-American children's English vocabulary will grow in the same manner that the Anglo-American child's English vocabulary grows, albeit a bit slower. However, this is not necessarily the case. Vocabulary not only develops in the presence of intelligence and experience, but also from an understanding and flexible employment of the syntax of the language. For example, one can quickly determine the meaning of the made-up word "corplum" by noting the syntactical relationship the "word" has in the following six sentences:

A corplum may be used for supports.
Corplums may be used to close off an open space.
A corplum may be long or short, thick or thin, strong or weak.
A wet corplum does not burn.
You need to make a corplum smooth with sandpaper.
The painter uses a corplum to mix his paints.

Among Anglo-American children, there is a growing comprehension of the sentence as a stable, grammatical structure. Younger children manipulate the sentence as a fluid medium, lacking closure. The frequency of such manipulation shows an abrupt drop at about ten years, with practically no occurrence above the age of eleven. However, although there is as yet no completed research known that determines the extent to which Mexican-American children recognize sentence closure or the syntactical signals within the English sentence, there is limited evidence that indicates a reluctance on the part of these children to rely on syntactical clues to word meanings. This is perhaps because of the confusions of syntactical relationships between the Spanish and the English languages, which makes the sometimes bizarre syntactical structures employed by these children unreliable syntactical signalers of word meaning.

The mastery of labelling is more time consuming, also, for these Spanish-English speaking children, since they have to learn two labels for each object, thus learning only one-half the number of labels that Anglo-American children learn with the same amount of effort. This is a serious handicap to their ability to learn to read English in two ways. First of all, they cannot match the word on the printed page with the word in their oral vocabulary, if they do not possess that word in their oral vocabulary, or possess it in unstable form. Secondly, they, in common with all people, tend to see and hear not what is said and written, but what their experience and knowledge permits them to see and hear, just as we often react not to what is actually happening in the world around us, but what we think is happening in the world around us. Thus, the child with a limited or unstable vocabulary will naturally misread or fail to read altogether a great number of words -- words that the child with a more highly developed, stable vocabulary reads quickly and evenly.

Of the second part of Webster's definition, "methods of combining words", very much less is known in relation to the teaching of reading. It is extraordinary that this is so, for ours is a syntactical language. Although we are inclined to think of words themselves as the only actual carriers of meaning, word—order or syntax is often as important and sometimes more important as a carrier of meaning than the actual words themselves. For example, in the following two sentences, the same six words are used. Yet, by rearranging the word order, the meaning of these words has changed completely.

The man saw the black boot.
The bootblack saw the man.

It is reasonable to assume that if children grow in their ability to master vocabulary, they can also grow in their ability to master grammar. And, indeed, they seem to do so. Many studies have been made, indicating that many Anglo children learn fairly thoroughly at an early age the basic structures of their language. However, not all Anglo children learn these syntactical patterns at an early age, nor do some of them acquire them later on, it would seem, if one is to believe the evidence taken from some of the writings of Anglo-American college students!

> "The only trouble I had with it was in Geometry, and I think this was mainly the cause of my reading comprehension."
>
> "But these fractions were a bewilderment! What does a child do when he cannot grasp and, if he doesn't, he is threatened to be disgraced and failed?"

For Mexican-American children struggling with two separate and sometimes conflicting syntactical patterns, formation of reliable patterns in either or both languages is indeed a slow, hazardous process, causing yet another severe handicap to these children in their efforts to read. The relationship between syntactical development and reading is, like the relationship between vocabulary development and reading, direct and forceful.

Children whose oral language more nearly approximates that of the book they are reading not only perform the mechanics of reading better, but they understand what they read better! More than that, they are less apt to glean misinformation from the printed page! For Mexican-American children who may be confused by two tongues, confusion in understanding what is read appears to be greatly increased. The most tragic aspect of this picture is that the harder these children try, the greater is their chance of error under present teaching procedures. Small wonder that these bi-lingual children drop out of school in such great numbers!

READING PROCESS . . .

THE READING PROCESS AND THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILD

In order to learn to read, a child must master both comprehension and mechanical skills. His life must have included enough varied experiences so that he can bring meaning to the printed page, in order that he may derive meaning from the printed page. He must also have developed his oral language to such a point that it includes the language system of the educational community. This is necessary so that he will be able to relate each word he sees in his school books to the appropriate word in his oral vocabulary.

Many Mexican-American children often fail to bring meaning to the text books they read, both because they have experienced only the life adventures of poverty which are not included in our middle-class oriented text books and also because they have experienced the life adventures of their Mexican culture, which are not represented in the school texts. In addition, many Mexican-American children find themselves in linguistic limbo because of the confusions resulting from their bilingualism. Thus, they find it an almost impossible task to match the word they find on the printed page with that in their oral vocabulary if, indeed, they have that word in their oral vocabulary at all.

The following chart comparing the reading problems of Negro children and Mexican-American children illustrates the preceding problems.

CHART I: Characteristics of Impoverished Minority-Group Children

It is hypothesized that these are the characteristics of young, impoverished minority-group children (Columns 1 and 2). It is further hypothesized that these characteristics influence the children's ability to learn to read. (Column 3). The brevity with which ideas must be put forth in a chart such as this will inevitably lead to too easy generalizations in many instances, therefore, the chart must be used with discretion. Depth of poverty seems to increase the potency of these characteristics, hence the degree to which these characteristics apply will differ from neighborhood to neighborhood, even from house to house.

(1) LANGUAGE

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
Language of Poverty	Language of Poverty	
1. Low vocabulary	1. Low vocabulary	1. Slow learning of individual written words. (existence of word itself must often be learned, as well as its written configuration.)
2. Idioms inadmissible in "polite" conversation used without realization of their inadmissibility.		2. Refusal of school authorities to admit some of child's oral vocabulary to school communicative system causes child to lack confidence in all of his oral language as base upon which to relate new learning of written language.
3. Sentence fragments	3. Sentence fragments	3. Inability to understand relationships (meaning) of words in any but the shortest, most simple sentences.
4. Large number of differing idioms and syntactical structures results in speech foreign to that of school language. (Ain't study'nya = 1 couldn't care less).		4. Does not find large part of his familiar oral speech reproduced in text books.

(1) LANGUAGE (continued)

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
	Language of Duality	
	5. Must learn 2 words for each concept.	5. Further depletion of words in oral vocabulary result in still slower learning of printed words (see 1 above).
	6. Often learns some concepts in English, some in Spanish and constantly switches back and forth, or mixes them in stream of speech.	6. Spanish words in oral vocabulary are often not recognized as such. Child is confused when he does not find them on printed page.
	7. Due to similarity of many Spanish and English words, aural patterns are often confused, hence difficult to establish in either language.	7. Phonics fails to be a reliable tool of word analysis.
	8. Conflicting rhythmical patterns of English and Spanish sentences make "sentence closure" difficult to establish in either language.	8. Syntactical clues to sentence closure do not function as readily as for the monoglot. The bilingual child may "run over periods" or fail to see relationship of clauses to main body of sentences more frequently than will the monoglot.
	9. Without sentence closure, the relationship of thought elements is difficult to grasp with resultant confusion about what is heard or said.	9. Without sentence closure, it is often impossible to understand the meaning of the printed page. Ex: (book) "There was a rooster who was afraid of the dark"; (child) "There was a rooster. Who was afraid of the dark?"
	10. Frustration with communication (1-9) above results in retreat into silence except under the most non-threatening circumstances.	10. Child is unusually silent in face of extensive communication (reading) situation which, by its nature, is a threat to his already shaky oral language structure.
11. Protection of ego against frustrations of poor communication system results in a system of inattention, so they do not hear!	11. Protection of ego against frustrations of poor communication system results in a system of inattention, so they do not hear!	11. Child "tunes out" directions from the teacher, with resultant loss of opportunities for instruction.

(1) LANGUAGE (continued)

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
	12. Because aural-oral communication system breaks down, child becomes over-dependent on non-verbal clues.	12. Child confronted with written text has no choice but to employ non-verbal techniques ... reads the pictures accompanying the text, parrots the teacher's words or guesses wildly... to the detriment of his own developing powers of word discrimination.
	13. Non-verbal clues of necessity must be less accurate than verbal clues.	13. Child is forced to function less accurately, thus inaccuracies of thinking and responding are the inevitable accompaniement of learning for him.
	14. Non-verbal clues limited to present tense, which tends to keep these children's oral language fixated at the present tense and on concrete objects ... thus resistant to the usual progression into past and future tense, with consequent development of purely symbolic language.	14. Gathering symbolic meaning from the printed page is particularly difficult for these children. Thus, true understanding of what they read is limited, for an unduly long period of time to simple, present tense, concrete (pictured) material. Growth toward reading of and understanding of symbolic material is slow and sometimes thwarted.

(2) CULTURE

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
1. Unaware of Negro's contribution to U.S. culture.		1. Does not identify with events depicted in school reading texts.
	2. Daily feed-in from nearby Mexico brings constant reminders of their recent cultural history, even to preschoolers. (Children heard mother tell me that her child's father did not want him to learn English because "then he would have to spit on the Mexican flag".)	2. Identification with events depicted in school reading texts may, in child's mind, actually require disloyalty to family and self. ("How can I do this and keep the Mexican part of myself intact?") Unresolved ambivalence may thus drain psychic energy from job of learning to read.
3. Less apt to participate in school-oriented cultural patterns of living than white children.	3. Less apt to participate in daily cultural patterns of living than are Anglo children.	3. Participation in daily middle class cultural pattern of living found in Public Elementary schools, both actual and written, may cause further ambivalence and further feelings of disloyalty to family-- with consequent diversion of energies to dealing with these powerful feelings, rather than attention to task of learning to read.

(3) SELF-IDENTIFICATION

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
1. Knows identity within family but unaware of total mainstream and his place in American culture.		1. Identity within family does not form platform on which to base experience in expanding community (school) ... no base from which to relate to reading experiences.
2. Home often broken up with consequent absence of male figure.		2. Absence of male figure becomes critical at about age 8 or 9, particularly for male child as his future goals and ambitions become projected. Until that time, Negro children identify well with female figure -- she is source of strength in the home. Accepts instruction willingly from female teachers.
3. Knows he is physically different by the time he is 2-4 years old.		(1-4) Creates a low self-concept and consequent lack of effort when confronted with the difficult task of learning to read.
4. Often not contented with bodily image.		
	5. Strong personal identity.	(5-8) Creates a high self-concept brought into almost immediate conflict with value-structure of school system which results in repression of identity with consequent confusion and dissipation of energies for learning to read.
	6. Secure position in organized family life.	
	7. Proud of bodily image.	
	8. Unaware that he belongs to minority group ("it wasn't until I got to school that I knew I was different ... it was a big blow".)	

(4) LIFE EXPERIENCES

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
Experiences of Poverty	Experiences of Poverty	
1. Few experiences outside neighborhood.	1. Few experiences outside neighborhood.	(1-4) Limited personal background inadequately verbalized upon which to base understanding of experiences written on the printed page. The meaning these children bring to the printed page is insufficient to enable them to obtain meaning from the printed page.
2. Few sensory experiences.	2. Few sensory experiences.	
3. Spontaneous verbal expressions of these experiences (1 & 2) but in limited form.	3. Verbal expression of these experiences (1 & 2) repressed.	
4. Few leisured adults to respond to these verbal expressions and assign value to them, resulting in further limitation.	4. Few leisured adults to respond to these verbal expressions and assign value to them, resulting in further repression.	

SUMMARY

NEGRO CHILDREN	MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN	EFFECT ON CHILD'S FUTURE ABILITY TO LEARN TO READ
1. Language deprivation.		1. Slow learning may be expected.
2. Limited cultural awareness.		2. Low interest may be expected.
3. Low self-identification.		3. Minimum effort may be expected.
4. Limited verbalization of experience.		4. Inadequate comprehension may be expected.
	1. Language deprivation and confusion.	1. Slow learning may be expected. Confused learning may be expected.
	2. Cultural conflict.	2. Disturbed interest may be expected.
	3. Strong self-identification.	3. Dissipated effort may be expected.
	4. Repressed verbalization of experiences.	4. Inadequate comprehension may be expected.

Cultural deprivation permeates almost all minority group research. However, there is little or no minority group research on the educational problems of the culturally different. However, while the pattern of the preschool Negro child is that of deprivation, limited awareness, verbal limitation and low self-esteem, that of the preschool Mexican-American child is one of confusion, conflict, repression and high self-esteem. Clearly, different measures are called for in helping these two groups of children. For the Negro child, the primary effort might well be directed toward establishing a strong self-concept, while for the Mexican-American child, the primary effort should probably be directed toward his language development and cultural ambivalences.

THE PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

A program is proposed which involves a two-pronged massive approach to instruction in reading for Mexican-American children. The first aspect of this proposal is directed at strengthening the children's oral language, while the second is directed toward altering the instructional program now in use to meet the special needs of these children. Language instruction will begin at the preschool level and continue through the third grade. The instructional program now employed at the school will be modified at the Kindergarten level in certain selected classrooms and modifications will continue through grade 3. Beginning with grade 4, it is anticipated that the children will be reading at grade level, and may participate in the regular school program.

The preschool program is a departure from current Los Angeles educational planning by reason of its existence, in the first place, since the education of children 3-4 years old has not been accepted as a general responsibility of the Public School system. In addition, this particular preschool departs from those few experimental preschools in Los Angeles and elsewhere, in that it is language oriented. Although aware that psychological, sociological and experiential factors are highly important in preschool training, these factors are thought to be less crucial to the reading process for these Mexican-American children than is their language development. Hence, the preschool experience for these children is focused on language development.

Unlike existing programs in the Los Angeles Public Schools, which attempt to develop the whole child, this proposal has redesigned the primary curriculum for the express purpose of teaching these Mexican-American children to read. While acknowledging the importance of other aspects of the curriculum to the mental, physical and social development of these children, it is felt that when these children fail to learn to read, they are so handicapped, both vocationally and scholastically, that their total development is jeopardized in spite of the attempt to develop the whole child on the part of the schools.

This, then, is a massive holistic attack on the reading problem. Its individualistic quality is particularly appropriate to the independent nature of Mexican-American children. Its emphasis on self-teaching is also particularly appropriate for these children upon whom so much family responsibility is placed at an early age. These factors, in addition to the inclusion of several methods of learning to read, rather than just one, make this program unique.

The project is planned as a four-year experiment at the very minimum. Because of the nature of the project, it is desirable to extend the study little by little rather than plunge the entire primary staff into it at one time. Therefore, the following time-sequence is suggested.*

	Preschool Years			Primary Years			
	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)**
1965 (Fall)	X	X	X				
1966 (Spring)	X	X	X	X			
1966 (Fall)	X	X	X	X	X		
1967 (Spring)	X	X	X	X	X	X	
1967 (Fall)	X	X	X	X	X	X	

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* For a more complete explanation of the time sequence, see chart on following page.

** Children age 9 are included here, as it is very possible that some of the children will take more than the usual number of years to complete the ungraded primary program.

TIME SCHEDULE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF READING

	Fall '65	Spring '66	Fall '66	Spring '67	Fall '67
	(PHASE ONE)				
PRESCHOOL YEARS					
Age 3 (Preschool)	8_1	8_1 25_1	25_1 28_1	28_1 54_1	54_1 54_2
4 (Preschool)	8_2	8_2 25_2	8_1 25_2 28_2	8_1 25_1 28_2 21	25_1 28_1 21 34
5(Kindergarten)	8_3 22	8_3 22	8_2 22	8_2 25_2 22	8_1 25_2 28_2
PRIMARY YEARS					
Age 6 (1st Grade)		30_1	8_3 30_1 22	8_3 22	8_2 22
7 (2nd Grade)			30_2	30_1 30_2	8_3 30_1 22
8 (3rd Grade)					30_2
Total Children with Project from Pre-school Years	24	74	130	205	293
Total Children Added to Project	22	52	104	104	104
GRAND TOTAL	46	126	234	309	397

Subscript 1 = First group of 8 children, of 25 children, of 28 children, of 30 children, etc.
Subscript 2 = Second group of 8 children, of 25 children, of 28 children, of 30 children, etc.
Subscript 3 = Third group of 8 children.

CHART 2

Since the Malabar School is a large school (1,300 children), there are several sections of the same class at each age level. Therefore, there is ample opportunity to establish a control factor in this experiment. It is proposed that the children at each age level be equally divided at random between the program now in use and the proposed program except for the project children who will be included in the latter group only. Thus, there will be an opportunity to compare the effectiveness of the two programs.

Since all phases of the program will be active by the Fall of 1967, although none of the project children who started in preschool will have reached the third grade by that time, it is proposed that this experiment be funded through the Fall of 1967. If learning conditions are favorable at that time, an extension of the program for two more years for further research and measurement of program stability will be requested.

The first step in the proposed massive attack on reading, then, comes at the preschool level ... from the ages of 3 to 6 years old, when language is developing most rapidly. It is hoped that conscious effort to develop the children's English and Spanish on the part of both teachers and parents will result in an increased tempo of language development, as well as an awareness of the existence of the two languages and their relationship on the part of the children entering the beginning-to-read program.

Oral language develops most rapidly at this age and is thought by some researchers to be "set" by the time the child reaches the age of six. In addition, according to Bloom, the evidence suggests that 50 per cent of the child's I.Q., as measured at age 17, is developed by the age of 4. Bloom also presents evidence that indicates that marked changes in the environment at an early age have more effect on that I.Q. than do equally marked changes in the environment in later years. Since children in the least favored socio-economic positions receive a restricted language experience, such children may well profit from the wider language experiences offered by the preschool experiences.

Since teaching is most effective when it occurs at a time when the skill taught is developing, it is thought that concentration on language building activities during these years will best prepare the children for successful acceptance of the reading program during the primary school years.

The children will pass from the preschool program (3 to 6 years) into the ungraded primary program (6 to 9 years). Because they will be speaking two separate languages, it is anticipated that each child's language will be highly individual in nature. Although more fully developed than formerly, it may not yet be fully developed enough to warrant the group techniques of instruction. Therefore, the curriculum presented to these children will be language-oriented to the extreme and highly individualized in nature. The major portion of their school day will be spent in one or another aspect of reading, with a minimum of grouping, and then only for such subjects as are not primarily language-oriented.

At the end of the third grade year, final evaluation of the effectiveness of the program will be made. Although tests of reading accomplishment will be made periodically at the end of each semester, it is recognized that many children will need at least three years and possibly four to learn this new skill, so the testing of these children previous to that time, while interesting, may be only a premature and inaccurate measure of the effectiveness of the project. By the end of the third grade, however, it is hoped that a majority of the children will be reading at or above grade level, in contrast to the present reading scores, as measured by the achievement test in use by the Los Angeles City Schools at that date.

Research was done in a limited fashion during the years 1962, 1963 and 1964, which indicated that the English language spoken by the children at this school was far below the level assumed for children engaged in a successful reading task. As a consequence, in the Fall of 1964, a pilot preschool language development program was launched using limited funds made available through the Los Angeles City Schools. This project had the backing of the Mexican-American community, as well as California State College at Los Angeles and the Claremont Graduate School and University Center. Philanthropical groups in the larger Los Angeles community helped the project personnel with gifts of second-hand toys, etc. The P.T.A. at the Malabar School provided inestimable assistance in the purchase of electronic equipment whereby it was possible to tape record everything one child said, all day long, no matter where that child was during the preschool day. Enough tapes for six months' recording have been provided by the Youth Opportunities Foundation. A grant of $591 from the Research and Grants Committee of California State College at Los Angeles is making it possible to transcribe these tapes. A Spanish-English speaking transcriber, who is knowledgeable in phonetic transcription as well, is currently engaged in making these transcriptions. It is hoped that from these tapes the following information will be gleaned.

(1) The frequency of, and possible confusion resulting from, the mixing of Spanish and English words in the same utterance.

(2) The levels of communication at which this mixing occurs.

(3) The extent of vocabulary use in both languages, both speaking and listening.

(4) The flexibility and complexity of syntactical development in both languages.

(5) Circumstances that seem to induce a more correct use of language.

(6) Circumstances that seem to induce a more creative use of language.

(7) The extent and effectiveness of self-induced language drill.

(8) The extent and effectiveness of teacher-induced language drill.

(9) Observable growth patterns peculiar to each child and the degree to which these patterns of growth differ from those of the larger language community.

(10) Possible relationships between conflicting cultural mores and language development.

(11) Extent to which at-home and in-school language differs, or is the same.

Some action research had been carried on in the classrooms in conjunction with some of the very creative teachers at the school, on a limited basis, which shows promise of better results in reading with these children, if continued.

Although there are other researchers working on this problem, notably Deutsch in New York and Metfessel here in Los Angeles, their work has not been concentrated exclusively with Mexican-American children, nor have they initiated a longitudinal plan for solving this very critical problem.

PRE-SCHOOL YEARS

THE PRESCHOOL YEARS

The child's understanding of reading and writing is based upon his ability to speak and hear. Thus, the child's ability to learn to read the printed word is directly related to his ability to use oral words. The development of oral language has not yet been fully traced, even in children who speak only one language, to say nothing of the bilingual child. Therefore, accurate tests of language development for the Spanish-English speaking child who is just beginning to learn to read have not yet been developed. However, the tests that we do have suggest that the Mexican-American children at the Malabar School show evidence of an English language pattern of development that does not form an adequate foundation upon which to base the beginning-to-read program. Hence, it is proposed that help be extended to children in the Malabar School area before they start instruction in reading, so that their oral language will form an adequate base for instruction in learning to read.

The period of most rapid development of a skill is the optimum time for instruction in that skill. It is therefore proposed that language learning opportunities be provided for Mexican-American children three to four years old, in a preschool program to be conducted at the Malabar School.

The development of oral language is largely a matter of the child's internal development, and not readily adapted to external, predetermined instruction. Nor is the preschool age child a suitable subject for such instruction! Therefore, language learning opportunities will be just that - increased opportunities for the Mexican-American child to learn to speak both English and Spanish. Language develops out of needs, desires and opportunities to communicate - either within oneself or with other people. Therefore, we have arranged experiences that will delight and intrigue the preschool age child. We have also provided him with adults and other children with whom he can talk about the things that interest him. In addition, we have given him an unstructured program within which to move, so that he may turn from one activity to another, as he wishes, or find time to be by himself when he needs to think and talk to himself about the events and experiences he is having.

The result is a room full of children relaxed, interested, assured of others' interest in and love for them -- in short, a room full of children who want to talk about the things that interest them and have a loving interested adult near at hand with whom they can communicate. We must, however, never confuse this task with directed teaching for these children. Directed educational demands are almost entirely inappropriate for this age group, particularly in the area of language development.

These children are engaged in a most marvelous transition from a primitive, almost animal, behavior, linguistically speaking, to the symbolic behavior found only in man. They are learning at an age when their brains are most underdeveloped, when they themselves are most without experience, to initiate the linguistic journey from the random sounds of the infant to the symbolic voices of the poet.

Although we are yet without an explanation of how this is done, we have some clues as to the conditions under which it is done. The baby, recreating the presence of the mother by emulating her sounds, uses language to bring her into his mind, not into his hand. The baby, from the beginning, then, engages in the act of seeing reality symbolically! This same baby quickly sees the utilitarian uses of language as a tool for communication and, by the time he is 2 or 3 years old, he is busy acquiring as much of this useful tool as he possibly can. This acquisition is carried on, however, not only because of utilitarian need; but also because of continued comfort-seeking. This duality of language usage continues throughout life.

Since we believe the key to language is symbolic activity rather than intelligent signalling, we hesitate to stress the latter in the preschool, lest the former be suppressed. Therefore, it is essential that we have an unstructured preschool. Lesson planning, in the sense that it is known in the primary grades, seems to us to be completely inappropriate here, even dangerous. We recognize the value of imitation, of repetition and drill to be a very important one in the language development of preschoolers, but we feel that it must be highly personalized and at the direction of the child, rather than of the adult. Our teachers regard themselves as expert cafeteria managers, arranging the classroom material that will initiate the experiences that they know the clientele will want to savor, watching the children carefully for signs of satiation or boredom, so that they may replace the old experiences with appropriate new ones, making sure at the same time that enjoyed experiences are readily available for reuse. In other words, instead of teaching language directly, our teachers will provide an environment in which the children will be moved to speech.

One must have a deep sense of trust in all mankind, as well as in little children, as an integral part of mankind, to encompass this theory of language learning or, perhaps, of preschool "instruction". This trust is shared by the most mature members of our society and, wherever employed in the education of children, demonstrates its worth by the results. Dr. Abraham Maslow outlines the process succinctly.

> The healthy child reaches out to the environment in wonder and interest ... to the extent that he feels safe enough to dare ... if he can choose those experiences which are (then) validated by the experiences of delight, he can return to the experience, repeat it, savor it to the point of satiation ... he then shows a tendency to go on to more complex, richer experiences (again if he feels safe enough to dare) ... Such experiences not only mean moving on, but have a feed-back effect on the self, in the feeling of certainty, of capability, mastery, self-trust and self-esteem.

The following examples, taken from actual occurences at the preschool, show how language is developed when following this learning theory.

Examples of Language-Development Activities, Cast Against the Background of Home-Like Play Activities at Preschool (no grouping of any kind except those the children themselves fall in and out of spontaneously)

Child-Initiated Verbal Activity	Concept Involved	Adult Inter-Action with Child
Fernando, watching garbage truck ... "Look - truck Go up - go up!"	Vocabulary, up, down Syntax, "It goes up. It goes down." Idea, contrast between up, down.	Takes Fernando on her lap, takes his hands gently in hers, laughs and points to garbage truck lifting cans. "It goes up,up,up! It goes down,down,down, down!" Continues until the relaxed Fernando giggles and jumps down from lap and runs off to play.
Joanne, at top of stairs (and at top of her voice) "Hi, everybody! Hi, everybody!"	Forms of greeting, courage to make new personal contacts, delights in making those contacts.	(laughing and smiling) "Hi, Joanne!" (Joanne responds, "Hi!") "Hello, Joanne!" (Joanne responds, "Hello!") This continues until Joanne shows signs of satiation.
Maria comes to the teacher, points to her skirt, and says, shyly, between giggles, "Mi falda!" Points to blouse, giggles even more, and says, "Mi blusa"; points to shoes and says, "Mis zapatos!"	Translation of known Spanish word by unknown English word. Reassurance that both Spanish and English are accepted by adult significant to the child. Recognition that there are 2 distinct language systems, Spanish and English.	Smiles very gently (this is a very shy child, almost whispers): "Mi falda - my skirt" "Mi blusa - my blouse" "Mis zapatos -- my shoes" Continues until Maria absolutely dissolves into helpless, delighted giggles ....

Thus, the adults seize every opportunity to analyze the child's oral expression, to feed back to the child his own words in slightly expanded form as it is felt that this expansion-contraction that appears to go on between child and adult is of great significance in the final development of the child's oral language. The adults also seize every opportunity to increase the child's awareness of words as it is hoped that word-awareness will function, if need be, in place of language skill when the child begins to learn to read, since it is not yet known whether adequate oral language skill can be established in both English and Spanish, even with early language learning opportunities, for the desired assimilation of reading instruction.

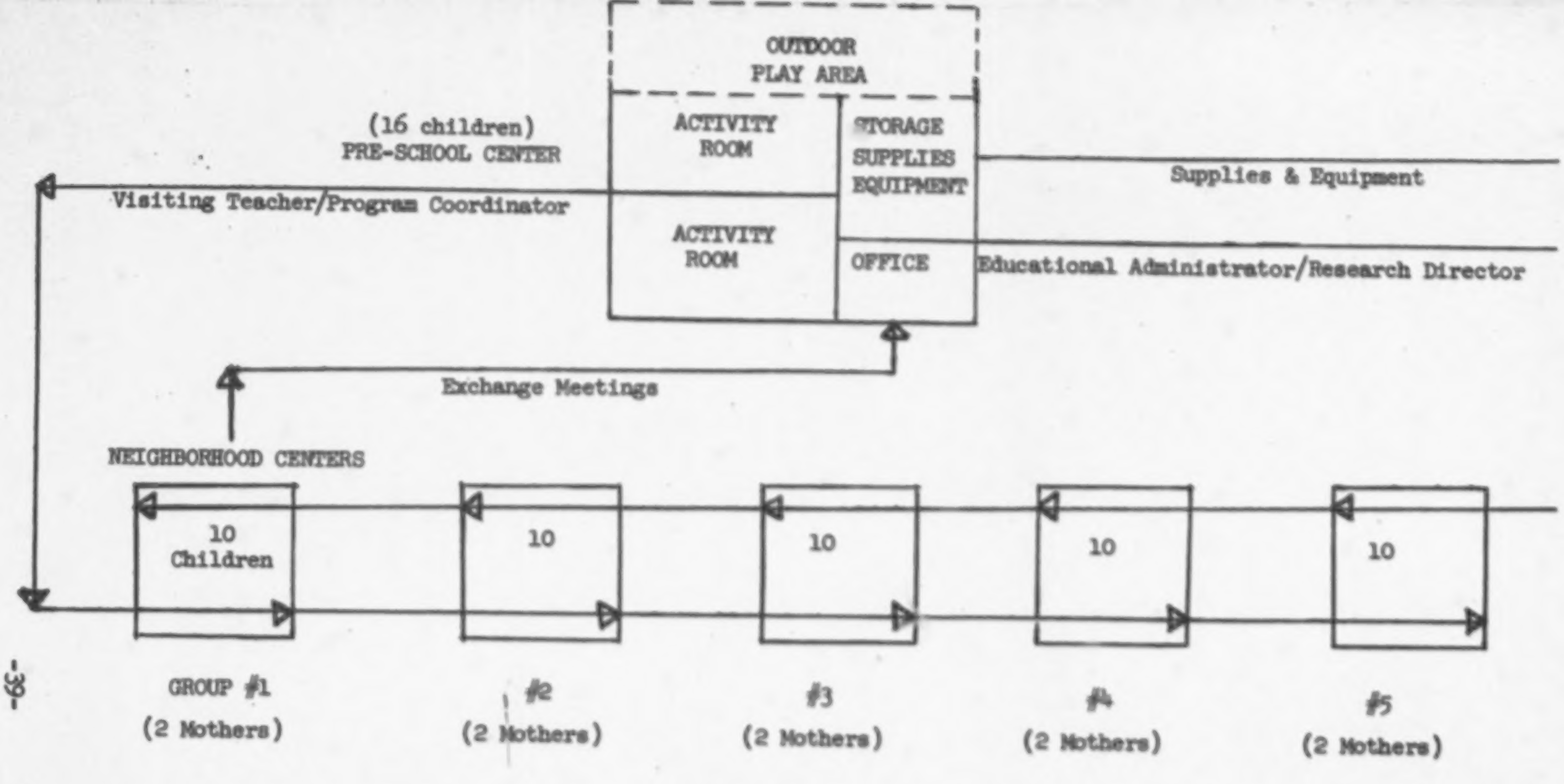
Although the desire to evaluate growth immediately in a project such as this is understandable, we cannot evaluate what we do not yet fully understand. Since the patterns of language growth have not yet been satisfactorily delineated, tests of such growth cannot yet be reliable. The "proof" of the efficacy of this project will have to be both postponed and pragmatic. It will rest on the ability of these children to read at or above grade level at the end of their third grade year!

Neighborhood Centers

Because of the necessity for continued adult/child conversation and consequent one-to-one relationship, the cost of such a program as this one to the public schools, based on the usual classroom organization, would be very high. However, the nature of the project and the abilities of the Mexican-American mothers in the project are such that the following plan is not only economically feasible but sociologically sound.

Of the fifteen mothers currently enrolled with their children in the project each semester, it is hoped that at least ten would be willing to work in pairs as alternating teachers in neighborhood early language developing groups of ten children each. Thus, at the end of two years, there would be approximately 200 children receiving daily early language developing opportunities in the Malabar School area, at a nominal cost to the public schools. Judging from the number of Kindergarteners entering the school each semester, this is pretty close to "saturation".

The objectivity of the Mexican-American mothers who have worked at the project this semester has been highly evident. Each one loves her child, yet she is willing to let other mothers work with him and is, in turn, willing to leave her own child to work constructively with other children. Indeed, so great has been this loving, yet objective, attitude toward their children on the part of the mothers that one day, when a teething baby-in-arms was being passed around from adult to adult for comforting, three visitors to the project could not tell which one of the parents present was the child's actual mother! These ladies have often had considerable family experience with comparatively large groups of children, both as children themselves and as mothers, hence they quickly learn the mechanics of handling children in groups at school. The more important, personal qualities that make for good adult-child relationships they already have by virtue of being the excellent mothers they are. Because the Center is an early language learning opportunity, and not a Nursery School, it is not necessary to ask these mothers to learn the philosophy and mechanics of Nursery Schooling. Because language develops best in a warm, home-like atmosphere, it is believed that these mothers, with pre-training at the Center, and continuing contact with the Center, could carry on a significant language developing program in the neighborhood.


OUTDOOR PLAY AREA
(16 children)
PRE-SCHOOL CENTER
ACTIVITY ROOM
ACTIVITY ROOM
STORAGE SUPPLIES EQUIPMENT
OFFICE
Supplies & Equipment
Visiting Teacher/Program Coordinator
Educational Administrator/Research Director
Exchange Meetings
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS
10 Children
10
10
10
10
GROUP #1
(2 Mothers)
#2
(2 Mothers)
#3
(2 Mothers)
#4
(2 Mothers)
#5
(2 Mothers)

RELATIONSHIP OF PRE-SCHOOL CENTER TO NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

(Five Neighborhood Centers shown will be established in Fall, 1965; five more will be established in Spring, 1966; five more in Fall, 1966; and five more in Spring, 1967.)

CHART 3

Fifteen mothers are currently connected with the Center. It is hoped that at least ten of these will be willing to pair with another of the ten mothers and undertake neighborhood groups of ten children, making five groups of ten children, plus the fifteen at the Center, or sixty-five children in all served by the Center during the Fall of 1965. (See Diagram on preceding page) Each of these groups will need, in addition to the two parents from the Center, five additional parents serving on a one-day-a-week basis, so that there will be two adults present with the children at all times. This is so that the safety of the children is assured and so that there will be a continuous flow of conversation between child and adult. The groups may meet consecutively in all ten houses, or continuously in one house, or any combination in between -- this would be entirely up to the discretion of the two Center mothers directing their neighborhood groups. Thus, it will be possible to retain the small adult-child ratio considered essential to avoid the large groups which are necessary if the cost to the Public Schools is to be kept within bounds. Thus, the repressive techniques necessary with large groups of young children, but so damaging to both language and ego development, will be eliminated.

The neighborhood mothers will meet at the Preschool Center regularly with the Center teachers, the Educational Administrator and the Research Director to exchange ideas and work out problems.

Supplies and equipment will be issued to the neighborhood groups from the Preschool Center once a week and/or whenever needed. The visiting teacher will keep track of these materials. This visiting teacher will spend her mornings visiting the neighborhood centers, working with the children, giving afternoon, this teacher will relieve the regular school staff so that they may make home calls. The Research Director will also visit these neighborhood groups, thus further strengthening the ties to the Preschool Center. It is believed that the two-way contact between the neighborhood groups and the Preschool Center will (1) bring fresh ideas from the parents to the Center, (2) maintain the neighborhood groups as part of the project, thus avoiding actual and/or psychological isolation, loneliness or feeling of abandonment, and (3) provide educational continuity for the neighborhood groups and to the Preschool Center, itself.

It is hoped and expected that the relationship of these neighborhood groups to the Center will be flexible -- some children in the original fifteen might be retained longer at the Center, if it is felt that the child might profit from such retention. Children in the neighborhood groups might come to the Center for films, rhythms, parties, etc., several times during the semester. The neighborhood groups might break up and reform in varying patterns during the semester; since all the neighborhood help will be voluntary, much deviation can be expected. The only additional cost will be the salary of the visiting teacher. Since it is hoped that each semester the visiting teacher and the project teacher will change places, the two salaries could be paid on the same scale.

The last year of preschool instruction corresponding to the usual Kindergarten year will assume some of the more formal aspects of language instruction presently found in the Kindergarten curriculum, although retaining more of the informality of the preschool than is the usual character of Kindergarten in Los Angeles City. The year will be designed to terminate preschool instruction, rather than initiate the child to school instruction as is currently the case. The child will be encouraged to complete the cycle of hearing-speaking-reading-writing by dictating his own stories to the teacher and, if he so desires, even writing a word or two of them himself, as well as reading back his own stories to the teachers. Poems and songs will be memorized if the child is capable of so doing. Puppetry will become more organized, as will other forms of dramatic activity, heretofore as unstructured as possible for the children. At this level, also, will come some of the training in group participation necessary for the child to adapt to if the business of a large public school is to continue day by day.

The development of the five-year-old in cognition and perception is reflected in the increased tempo of learning tasks presented to him, although still on an individual basis. Growth into an understanding of the counting numbers, their communicative properties and use in keeping track of game scores, etc., will be pursued vigorously, rather than left to incidental learning. In addition, the teacher will work on writing and phonics skills with such children as show an ability to respond to such instruction. The inquiring, adventurous mind of the five-year-old will be further stimulated by some simple forays into scientific phenomena, always on an individual basis and never employing coercion, implied or stated. This will be splendid training, of course, for the individualized instruction, as well as independent self-teaching the children will be receiving in heavy doses as they start the beginning-to-read program next year in the ungraded primary.

PRIMARY YEARS

to Mexican-American children has already been demonstrated. They have voluntarily and without remuneration participated in several short-term action research projects in their own class room during the last few years. In addition, they, with other East District teachers, are receiving inservice instruction in Mexican and American cultural comparison, group dynamics and the teaching of English as a second language. Teachers for both phases of the project, the preschool years and the primary years, will be drawn from the staff of the Malabar School when possible.

California State College at Los Angeles

The California State College at Los Angeles has an enrollment of over 20,000 students. It is located in the East Los Angeles area which has a Mexican-American population exceeded only by Mexico City. The college is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the California State Board of Education, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, et al; it is also a member of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States, the Western Association of Graduate Schools, the American Council on Education, the Western College Association and the Association of American Colleges.

Since its creation in 1947, the college has had many students from minority groups. It has, therefore, been able to develop and maintain a warm relationship with these students and a sympathetic understanding of their special problems and needs.

The School of Education annually prepares more than 1,000 students to receive California teaching credentials. These students, for the most part, receive their student-teaching experience in schools that have a large population of disadvantaged youth. It is currently engaged in a training (curriculum development) project sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development Welfare Administration, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, in cooperation with the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime. The overall purpose of this study is to create new curricula to prepare students in a school of education so they become more useful, more active and more permanent teachers of disadvantaged youth. The Los Angeles City Schools and the Youth Opportunities Board of Greater Los Angeles are cooperating in this project.

BUDGET

BUDGET SUMMARY 1965-67

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION		$219,142
Program Coordinator	$ 15,000	
Educational Administrator	15,000	
Research Director	30,000	
Secretary	10,800	
Teachers	108,000	
Preschool Mothers	13,500	
Bilingual Psychologist	3,000	
Nurse	1,340	
Research Transcribers	1,080	
Custodian	1,500	
Employee Benefits 10%	19,922	
EQUIPMENT		$ 48,550
Preschool	$ 28,600	
Audio Visual Unit	5,000	
Recording Units	2,700	
Non-Consumables	6,050	
Supplies	2,200	
Operation and Maintenance	4,000	
OVERHEAD		$ 26,769
TOTAL BUDGET 1965-67		$294,461

PROGRAM BUDGET 1965-66

	ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION		$79,728
	Program Coordinator (½ time)	$ 7,500	
	Educational Administrator (½ time)	7,500	
	Research Director	15,000	
	Secretary	5,400	
(4)	Teachers	32,000	
(5)	Mothers (360 hours preschool)	2,250	
	Bilingual Psychologist (4 hours/week)	1,500	
	Nurse (2 hours/week)	670	
	Transcriber (research tapes)	360	
	Custodian (2 hours/week)	300	
	Employee Benefits 10%	7,248	
		$79,728	
	EQUIPMENT		$17,950
(6)	Preschool Units - General ($1300 each)	$ 7,800	
	Research Audio Visual Unit (videotape)	5,000	
	Recording Unit (receiver/amplifier/recorder/tape)	900	
(6)	Non-Consumable Units ($275 each)	1,650	
(6)	Supply Units ($100 each)	600	
	Operation and Maintenance	2,000	
		$17,950	
	OVERHEAD AT 10%		$ 9,768
	TOTAL BUDGET 1965-66		$107,446

PROGRAM BUDGET 1966-67

	ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION		$139,414
	Program Coordinator (½ time)	$ 7,500	
	Educational Administrator (½ time)	7,500	
	Research Director	15,000	
	Secretary	5,400	
(9½)	Teachers	76,000	
(25)	Mothers (360 hours preschool)	11,250	
	Bilingual Psychologist (4 hours/week)	1,500	
	Nurse (2 hours/week)	670	
(2)	Transcribers (research tapes)	720	
	Custodian (8 hours/week)	1,200	
	Employee Benefits 10%	12,674	
		$139,414	
	EQUIPMENT		$ 30,600
(16)	Preschool Units - General ($1300 each)	$ 20,800	
(2)	Recording Units (receiver/amplifier/recorder/tape)	1,800	
(16)	Non-Consumable Units ($275 each)	4,400	
(16)	Supply Units ($100 each)	1,600	
	Operation and Maintenance	2,000	
		$ 30,600	
	OVERHEAD AT 10%		$ 17,001
	TOTAL BUDGET 1966-67		$187,015

THE PRIMARY YEARS

It has generally been assumed that there is a level of competency in the English language which the child must attain before he can profitably be taught to read. The mechanical task of matching the printed word to the oral word is easier for the child if his oral language has developed to the point where it encompasses the larger school language community that lies beyond the immediate confines of his own family. Such maturity is also felt to be a reflection of the child's generally satisfactory development, intellectual, experiential and psychological, which he also needs if he is to master the complex task of reading our English language.

Research which supports this position has been done on monoglots. The assumption has then been made that what was good for them would also be good for the Spanish-English speaking child and that language incompetency in the former was the same as language incompetency in the latter. Therefore, it was assumed that the same procedures which would ordinarily be used to bring language to a level of competency for the monoglot would also be appropriate for the bilingual child.

However, the typical six-year-old monoglot who is retarded in language development may be quite a different person from the typical six-year-old bilingual child who has not yet developed competency in English. The monoglot is probably, although not necessarily, slightly below average in I.Q., whereas the I.Q. of the bilingual child may be expected to fall within the norm. The monoglot may suffer from an actual lack of experiences, whereas the bilingual child may suffer only from an inability to verbalize the experiences he has had. The language of the monoglot may be retarded because of deep-seated psychological forces that have resulted in a withdrawal of speech, whereas the bilingual child may have been forced into silence only because he has so few words with which to express his ebulient personality. In other words, the factors which have contributed to the malfunctioning of language in the typical monoglot are largely absent in the typical bilingual child, leaving only the factor of bilingualism to be dealt with, as we plan a program of reading instruction for him.

Since this child functions in two languages, he must either have two words to express the same idea, or he can express some ideas only in one language, other ideas only in the second language. In either case, his oral language has rarely developed to include that of the larger language community. In the case of bilingual children who come from areas of poverty, there is the further complicating factor that their limited language rarely extends itself to the language of the school community. Thus, bilingual children who are learning to read are often confronted with the dual task of learning a new oral vocabulary while at the same time relating that oral vocabulary to the words found on the printed page. In spite of hard work on their part and on the part of their teachers, this is a slow, agonizing process stretching over an excessive number of years, even if it is accomplished at all.

In addition, bilingual children have rarely achieved a stable sense of sentence closure in either language, thus the rhythms of the one intrude upon the other, so that the sentence-building words, the last to emerge in stable form in the language of the monoglot, rarely appear in anything like stable form in the oral language of the bilingual child of six. This makes the matching of the word in their oral vocabulary to the word on the printed page an even more difficult task for the Spanish-English speaking child.

In every other aspect, however, the typical bilingual child standing on the threshold of the first grade classroom in September is like the monoglot whose language has developed sufficiently to cope with the task of learning to read.

His aspirational levels are as high. His intelligence is as good. His work habits are equally effective, he is as cooperative, as eager to learn and fully as proud. His only problem is that he possesses a language structure that does not yet extend into the larger school language community, a language structure that is unreliable as a base from which to relate the printed words in his text books. His is an oral language structure that, for the present, anyway, is all his own, not shared by any other single person.

It would seem to be self-evident, then, that the most effective way to teach him to read is to teach him on a completely individualized basis.

It is the purpose of this proposal to develop a massive attack on the teaching of reading to bilingual Mexican-American first graders, basing this attack on a completely individualized approach in (1) phonics, (2) sight, (3) kinesthetic and (4) oral language methods. We further propose to develop material so that the children may instruct themselves where possible. We also propose to develop the use of the camera in the classroom to facilitate the children's increased awareness of themselves in relation to the school world. This means that a greater part of the school day will have to be spent on the teaching of reading than would ordinarily be the case to bring these children to an acceptable level of competency until such time as the preschool program will succeed in developing their language to the point at which most monoglots have developed it upon arrival in the first grade. Therefore, all but one-half hour of the child's total in-school learning should be devoted to learning to read. It cannot all be apparent as such to the child, since he would soon weary under such a heavy time burden, but one-half of his total learning time should be directly related and one-third of his total learning time should be indirectly, but forcefully nevertheless, related to his learning to read.

Special Materials Needed

1) Kidney-shaped table

2) Individual copies of

    Blocks and sets of pre-primers; primers; 1st, 2nd and 3rd readers; library and text books.
    Sets of flash cards
    Notebook for teacher

3) Phonics work books (5 per child)

4) Phonics flash cards

5) Alphabet boxes (1 per child)
Primary typewriter - clerk to type stories for teachers' aid

6) Self-instructional materials (teacher aide to construct them)

7) Accompaniment (teacher aide) for dancing

8) Camera, developing and printing facilities and someone to do the work

9) Arithmetic work books

10) Arithmetic self-teaching materials

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.
9-10	Sight Vocabulary Building & Individualized Reading				
10:00-10:20	Recess				
10:20-11:00	Fernald	Phonics	Fernald	Phonics	Fernald
11:00-11:30	Arithmetic				
11:30-12:30	Lunch - Play				
12:30-1:40	Music, Art, History, Science, etc. (all language-oriented)				
1:40-2:00	P.E.				
2:00	Home				

Sight Vocabulary Building and Individualized Reading

One-third of the children will come to each of three reading groups on a self-selected basis for twenty minutes. Since the work will be individual, there will be no need to group them for instructional purposes. Sometimes it is nice to be able to work with a friend, sometimes it is also nice to be able to work apart from one's friend. Sometimes it is fun to be able to "pace" oneself against a child who may have hitherto been superior to you ... sometimes it is nice to work with a child you would like to have become your friend. Since the groups will change about once a month, there will be ample opportunity for the changing patterns of small children's friendships to be accomodated. These same groups will prevail for phonics and Fernald, although they may change for arithmetic. The children will select books they want to read from the books the teacher has provided. Thus, the teacher will control the pattern of learning, although the children will have some personal determination of what they will actually read.

At first, the choice of books will be limited to the one pre-primer that comes at the start of the basal reading series, since that is the only book in which they will know the vocabulary, but the choice of what page the children will read in that book will rest with each child, himself. As the children's vocabulary widens, more books will be added to the assortment of books the teacher has laid out from which the children choose. As the children read the books to themselves at the table, the teacher goes to each child, one at a time, and checks his flash recognition of the words in the book by flashing word cards to the child. If he does not know the words so flashed, he may leave the group, go off with another child who knows the words, and learn them. When the teacher has checked each child out on the flash cards each day, she then devotes the rest of that period to reading with each child, individually, in the book of his choice, and talking with him about his understanding of what he has read.

construct graphically by phonetic synthesis a word known in aural form only. Each child will proceed at his own pace, through an orderly progression of sound discrimination from the isolated sounds of the individual letters to the construction, by sound, of words of decreasing phonetic consistency.

Thus, although the English language has many phonetic inconsistencies, by the time the child has learned the consonants and the short sounds of the vowels, he can sound out 62 per cent of the syllables in the words he reads. Context clues will enable him to deduce the rest of the word in most cases, if he has succeeded in learning to mediate verbally. If the children are able to proceed further into the study of phonics, they will, of course, succeed in mastering an even higher per cent of the syllables they encounter in their reading, with less and less forced reliance on context or other secondary clues to unknown words.

Story-Writing (Fernald)

This method holds the most promise for the Mexican-American child who is learning to read. It is the only known method in which the child cannot be forced beyond the power of his language structure. It also provides an unlimited ceiling for achievement. The children come to the story-writing group in the same manner as to the other two groups. Each child brings his own box of words that he, himself, has wanted to learn. He then writes any story he wants to write, each child writing his own story, different from that of any other child's.

When he comes to a word he does not know, he looks for it in his box or, if it is not there, asks the teacher for it. She writes it for him on a large slip of paper. He then traces it with his finger, saying the word as he traces it. When he thinks he can write it without looking at it, he turns it over and writes it on the back of the paper. He then checks it and, if correct, writes it in his story, then files it in his box. If it is not correct, he traces it again and again until he can write it without looking. The teacher then types the completed story for him and, when he has six of these stories, binds them into a "book" for him which he (and often his friends) then uses as a supplemental reading book during the individualized reading part of the program.

This is a very potent method. The children become extremely involved with the stories they write. They will work tirelessly on the words they really want to know. Since the words are the words they use in daily life, neither the structure of the sentences nor the content of the stories will be beyond their grasp, therefore, they are using only primary learning clues to read and to comprehend what they have written. The books they complete take on a highly individualistic tone and are much treasured both by the children, themselves, and their families. Because the word boxes are alphabetized for easier access to the words, the children learn the alphabet automatically and functionally in response to their immediate needs. Because reading and writing are reverse phases of each other, the children are really learning to read every moment they are writing. A feeling of authorship and an appreciation of the good writing of others comes to these children almost as a "dividend" of this method. They quickly become aware of the different kinds of stories and the difficulties of writing interesting material.

Self-Instruction

Since many of these children are accustomed to taking extraordinary responsibilities in their own homes, it is not reasonable to assume that we have to "hand-feed" all education to them. Much of their learning of rote material can be done quite apart from the teacher, on a self-educational basis. Therefore, during the time when one-third of the class is with the teacher, it is suggested that one-third of the class be teaching themselves by the use of appropriate self-instructional materials. This will not only free the teacher from routine teaching tasks so that she may work individually with children for a longer period of time, but it will also show the child, by the faith we have, that he can do this sort of self-instruction, that he is an able person who can control his own learning, direct it into the paths he wants it to go and see that he learns. He does not have to sit around and be "motivated"! The fact that learning is there to be seized and that there are materials with which he can seize this learning is enough for a healthy child! Once he sees that he can do this, he is greatly strengthened, and rightly so, for all subsequent tasks he sets before himself.

Afternoon Block of History, Geography, Civics, Science, Art and Music

These are all activities which may be taught in a group to expose children to an exchange of ideas, contrasted with the morning, academic activities, and should be taught primarily as a base upon which to base further instruction in reading. Dr. Alfred Hibbs has pleaded with primary educators to teach not science per se, but science as a means of teaching reading so that, when the children come to college, they will be able to learn new scientific theory via the printed page, and their college instructors will not have to take time from the teaching of science to teach them to read!

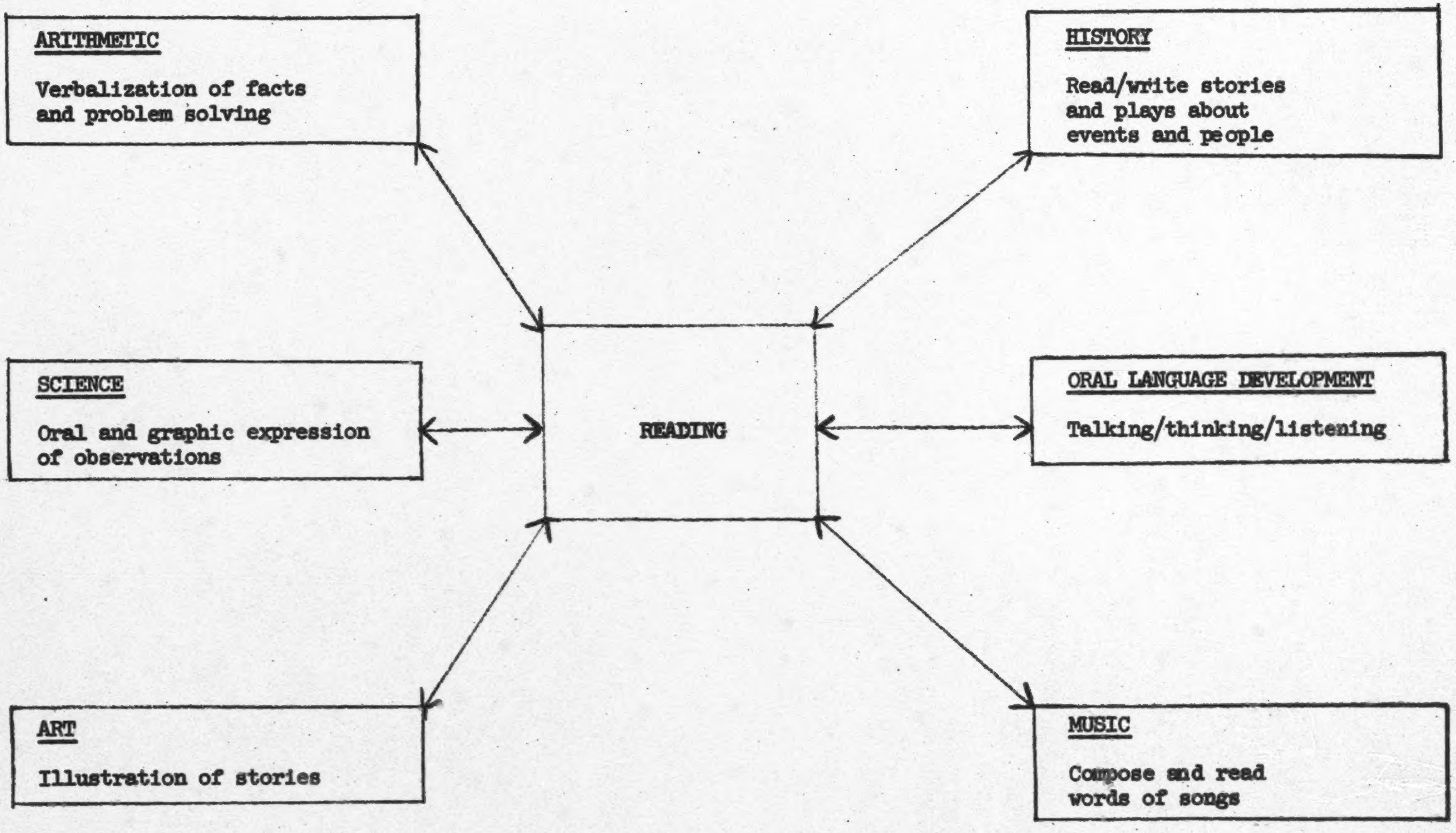
Similarly, History and Geography should be made the vehicle for further instruction in reading. These programs should revolve around dramatic representations of the life being studied, as well as songs and dances related to it. This will bring the children into contact with History, while at the same time strengthen their language skills. Thus, they may more readily enter into the advanced symbolic thought required during the Junior High and High School years -- years during which there are frequent drop-outs among Mexican-American children.

Photography

Finally, the use of photographs of the children as they go about their daily learning tasks to interpret to them their role in the life of the school and in the academic world in general is as useful as are photographs to interpret themselves in the life of the family and the community, but it is a facet of education that has long been overlooked. In addition to and, perhaps, far more important than the acquisition of academic skills as a base for future learning on the part of the child, is the firm belief that this is an aspect of life with which he desires to continue his acquaintance. If it is only something to be endured until the bell brings blessed relief, then the best of methods and the hardest of work on the part of both child and teacher will result in failure for both! Photographs help to accomplish this identification with school life as they do with the life outside the school. A good camera, with developing and printing facilities, as well as an "aide" to do the work, should be available to each teacher.

Evaluation

In the end of the second grade year, an achievement test will be given to the project children. Their performance will be cast against those of (1) children who completed the second grade at the Malabar School prior


ARITHMETIC
Verbalization of facts and problem solving
HISTORY
Read/write stories and plays about events and people
SCIENCE
Oral and graphic expression of observations
READING
ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
Talking/thinking/listening
ART
Illustration of stories
MUSIC
Compose and read words of songs

RELATIONSHIP OF SOME MAJOR CURRICULUM AREAS TO READING

CHART 4

to the introduction of this program,(2) children at Malabar completing the third grade simultaneously with the project children, (3) other third grade children throughout the district. Very limited research indicates that many Mexican-American children may be far below the threshold of language development ordinarily found in children entering the beginning-to-read program of first grade. It is hoped that during this research period, the language baseline needed for adequate learning may be established. It is also hoped that the position of the language of Mexican-American children in relation to this baseline may be compared to that of the language of children from other culture groups. Thus, it is hoped that the ultimate performance at grade 3 of the project children may also be able to be evaluated with respect to the base from which these children started.

In addition, it is hoped that through the continued use of the electronic recording device now being used with the preschool children, a more accurate understanding of the language development of the Spanish-English speaking child may be obtained ... with the hope that with that understanding will come greater insight into effective ways of teaching these children to read.

PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Project Direction

The program will be carried out by three agencies: the Youth Opportunities Foundation, the Los Angeles City Schools, and California State College at Los Angeles. Effective and efficient execution of this project is virtually assured by the following division of responsibilities:

Youth Opportunities Foundation (Program Coordinator)

1. Financial management
2. Progress monitor
3. Publication of all reports
4. Selection of Mexican-American resource personnel
5. Liaison for college, school, community and outside agencies

Los Angeles City Schools (Educational Administrator)

1. Supervision of educational program
2. Supervision and/or coordination of teachers, classified, parents, pupils
3. Provision of materials of instruction

California State College at Los Angeles (Research Director)

1. Direction of all project research and evaluation
2. Preparation of all technical reports
3. Participation with Educational Administrator in supervision of instruction

Youth Opportunities Foundation

The Youth Opportunities Foundation is a non-profit California corporation incorporated in July, 1964, "to carry out educational and vocational programs and to grant scholarships to worthy students", especially within the

Mexican-American community of California. Managing Director and Executive Vice President is Mr. Felix Castro, Registered Professional Engineer (University of California '48). Affairs of this Foundation are directed by a Board of responsible Mexican-American leaders. These include Congressman Edward R. Roybal, Chairman; Mr. Felix Castro; Dr. Francisco Bravo, M.D., President, Los Angeles City Board of Police Commissioners; Judge Philip M. Newman, Los Angeles Judicial District; Mr. Carlos Borja, Agency for International Development, Department of State; Dr. Manuel Guerra, Ph.D., Professor, University of Southern California, and Judge Leopoldo Sanchez, Los Angeles Judicial District.

This Foundation has recently initiated pioneering programs in support of worthy Mexican students in California. Twenty-five students selected by UCLA and this Foundation have been granted grants-in-aid for the Spring semester of 1965. This Foundation is also supporting the Malabar Language Development Project at the Malabar Elementary School in East Los Angeles. The purpose of this project is to determine the patterns of language development among preschool children living in the Spanish/English-speaking community of East Los Angeles and to investigate the reading difficulties of these children in our public schools. This Foundation and the School of Education of the California State College at Los Angeles have jointly submitted to the U.S. Office of Education and to the Office of Economic Opportunity a proposal to undertake the recruitment and training of hundreds of Mexican-American students for careers in education.

The activities and programs of this Foundation have been made possible through the support of the following firms: the Aerospace Corporation, Carnation Company, Bank of America, Sears, Roebuck & Co., Theo Hamm Brewing Company, Title Insurance and Trust Company, Santa Fe Drilling Company, Matson Lines, Alpha Beta Markets, R.C. Baker Foundation, Norris-Thermador Corporation, RKO General Foundation, Jerome and Flora Regensburg Foundation, Bullock's Foundation, Mr. Coleman W. Morton (Investment Company of America) and Mr. Anthony Newman (Newman & Newman, Attorneys).

Los Angeles City Schools

The Schools of the City of Los Angeles have initiated participation in the anti-poverty program in nine different projects at ninety-eight elementary schools, eleven adult schools, five senior high schools and five junior high schools. These programs affect an estimated 22,100 students.

The pupil population of the East District area of the Los Angeles City Schools, where the Malabar School is located, is predominantly of Mexican descent. Twenty-five of the fifty-eight elementary schools in this area have special programs which include twenty-five extended day schools, seven Saturday schools and three preschools. In addition, there are special programs in group counseling, student achievement centers, parent-child preschool classes, guidance, counseling, testing and home management.

Of the Malabar School's total enrollment of 1325 pupils, approximately 95 per cent is of Mexican descent. Sixty per cent of these children speak only Spanish in the home, and 10 per cent of the total enrollment is non-Spanish speaking.

Since the Malabar School is a training school for the Los Angeles City Schools, the teachers who elect and are selected to teach at this school are among the finest in the city. They are dedicated, research-oriented career teachers. Their interest in finding more effective ways of teaching reading